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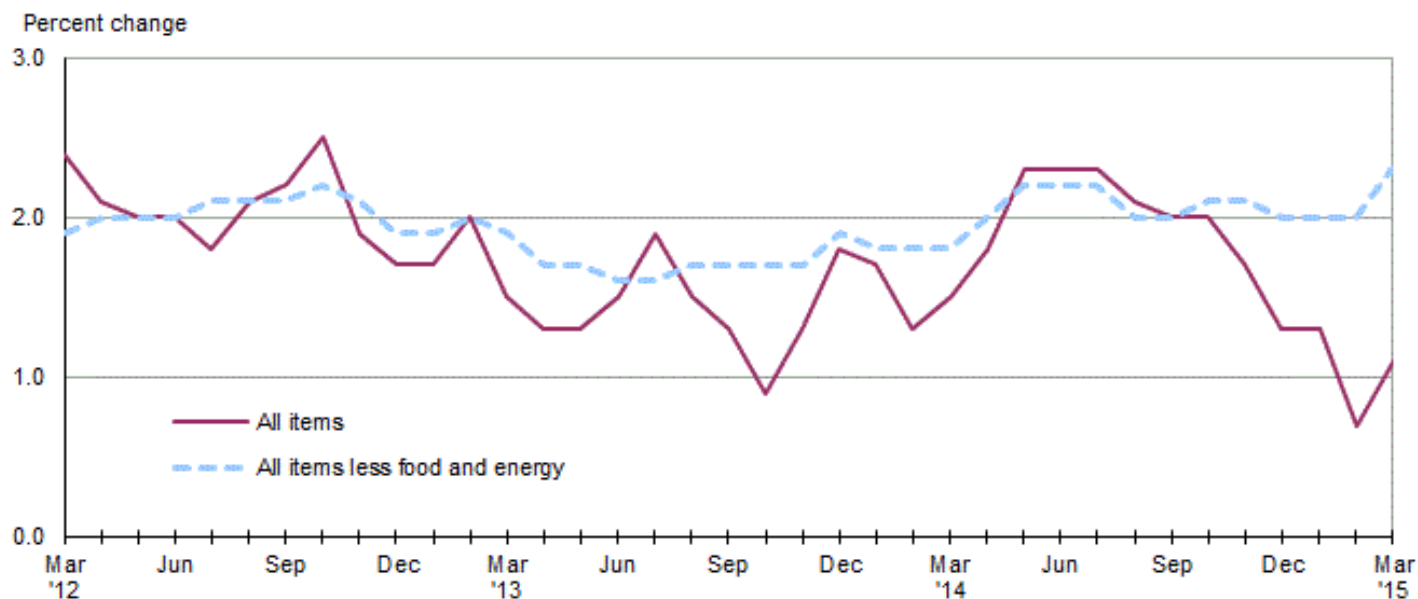
Consumer Price Index, West Region — March 2015

Area prices were up 0.8 percent over the past month, up 1.1 percent from a year ago

Prices in the West Region, as measured by the Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U), rose 0.8 percent in March, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported today. (See table A.) Regional Commissioner Richard J. Holden noted that the March increase was influenced by higher prices for gasoline. (Data in this report are not seasonally adjusted. Accordingly, month-to-month changes may reflect seasonal influences.)

Over the last 12 months, the CPI-U rose 1.1 percent. (See [chart 1](#) and [table A](#).) Energy prices fell 13.1 percent, largely the result of a decrease in the price of gasoline. The index for all items less food and energy advanced 2.3 percent over the year. (See [table 1](#).)

Chart 1. Over-the-year percent change in CPI-U, West region, March 2012–March 2015



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Food

Food prices declined 0.3 percent for the month of March. (See [table 1](#).) Prices for food at home decreased 0.7 percent, but prices for food away from home crept up 0.2 percent for the same period.

Over the year, food prices advanced 2.7 percent. Prices for food away from home rose 2.8 percent since a year ago, and prices for food at home increased 2.6 percent.

Energy

The energy index advanced 9.5 percent over the month. The increase was mainly due to higher prices for gasoline (19.4 percent). Prices for electricity were virtually unchanged (0.1 percent), while prices for natural gas service decreased 1.5 percent in for the same period.

Energy prices fell 13.1 percent over the year, largely due to lower prices for gasoline (-21.2 percent). Prices paid for electricity rose 0.8 percent, but prices for natural gas service decreased 1.6 percent during the past year.

All items less food and energy

The index for all items less food and energy advanced 0.3 percent in March. Higher prices for apparel (2.0 percent) and shelter (0.3 percent) were partially offset by lower prices for education and communication (-0.2 percent).

Over the year, the index for all items less food and energy advanced 2.3 percent. Components contributing to the increase included shelter (4.0 percent) and medical care (2.9 percent). Partly offsetting the increases was a price decline in education and communication (-0.1 percent).

Table A. West Region CPI-U monthly and annual percent changes (not seasonally adjusted)

Month	2010		2011		2012		2013		2014		2015	
	Monthly	Annual	Monthly	Annual	Monthly	Annual	Monthly	Annual	Monthly	Annual	Monthly	Annual
January.....	0.3	1.9	0.5	1.4	0.4	2.6	0.3	1.7	0.3	1.7	-0.3	0.7
February.....	0.1	1.4	0.6	1.9	0.4	2.5	0.8	2.0	0.4	1.3	0.6	0.9
March.....	0.3	1.6	0.9	2.6	0.9	2.4	0.4	1.5	0.6	1.5	0.8	1.1
April.....	0.2	1.5	0.6	3.0	0.2	2.1	0.0	1.3	0.3	1.8		
May.....	0.1	1.3	0.3	3.2	0.2	2.0	0.2	1.3	0.6	2.3		
June.....	-0.1	0.6	-0.2	3.1	-0.2	2.0	0.1	1.5	0.1	2.3		
July.....	0.1	0.8	-0.1	2.9	-0.3	1.8	0.0	1.9	0.1	2.3		
August.....	0.1	0.7	0.2	3.0	0.5	2.1	0.1	1.5	-0.1	2.1		
September.....	-0.1	0.5	0.4	3.5	0.5	2.2	0.2	1.3	0.1	2.0		
October.....	0.1	0.6	0.0	3.4	0.4	2.5	-0.1	0.9	-0.1	2.0		
November.....	0.0	0.9	-0.2	3.2	-0.7	1.9	-0.4	1.3	-0.6	1.7		
December.....	0.2	1.3	-0.3	2.7	-0.5	1.7	0.0	1.8	-0.5	1.3		

The April 2015 Consumer Price Index for the West Region is scheduled to be released on May 22, 2015.

Technical Note

The Consumer Price Index (CPI) is a measure of the average change in prices over time in a fixed market basket of goods and services. The Bureau of Labor Statistics publishes CPIs for two population groups: (1) a CPI for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U) which covers approximately 89 percent of the total population and (2) a CPI for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers (CPI-W) which covers 28 percent of the total population. The CPI-U includes, in addition to wage earners and clerical workers, groups such as professional, managerial, and technical workers, the self-employed, short-term workers, the unemployed, and retirees and others not in the labor force.

The CPI is based on prices of food, clothing, shelter, and fuels, transportation fares, charges for doctors' and dentists' services, drugs, and the other goods and services that people buy for day-to-day living. Each month, prices are collected in 87 urban areas across the country from about 4,000 housing units and approximately

26,000 retail establishments--department stores, supermarkets, hospitals, filling stations, and other types of stores and service establishments. All taxes directly associated with the purchase and use of items are included in the index.

The index measures price changes from a designated reference date (1982-84) that equals 100.0. An increase of 16.5 percent, for example, is shown as 116.5. This change can also be expressed in dollars as follows: the price of a base period "market basket" of goods and services in the CPI has risen from \$10 in 1982-84 to \$11.65. For further details see the CPI home page on the Internet at www.bls.gov/cpi and the *BLS Handbook of Methods, Chapter 17, The Consumer Price Index*, available on the Internet at www.bls.gov/opub/hom/homch17_a.htm.

In calculating the index, price changes for the various items in each location are averaged together with weights that represent their importance in the spending of the appropriate population group. Local data are then combined to obtain a U.S. city average. Because the sample size of a local area is smaller, the local area index is subject to substantially more sampling and other measurement error than the national index. In addition, local indexes are not adjusted for seasonal influences. As a result, local area indexes show greater volatility than the national index, although their long-term trends are quite similar. NOTE: Area indexes do not measure differences in the level of prices between cities; they only measure the average change in prices for each area since the base period.

The West Region covered in this release is comprised of the following thirteen states: Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, Utah, Washington, and Wyoming.

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Table 1. Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U): Indexes and percent changes for selected periods West (1982-84=100 unless otherwise noted)

Item and Group	Indexes			Percent change from-		
	Jan. 2015	Feb. 2015	Mar. 2015	Mar. 2014	Jan. 2015	Feb. 2015
Expenditure category						
All Items.....	238.318	239.748	241.690	1.1	1.4	0.8
All items (December 1977=100).....	385.227	387.539	390.678			
Food and beverages	249.219	249.100	248.281	2.6	-0.4	-0.3
Food	249.403	249.263	248.400	2.7	-0.4	-0.3
Food at home	250.441	249.628	247.781	2.6	-1.1	-0.7
Food away from home.....	246.713	247.524	248.050	2.8	0.5	0.2
Alcoholic beverages	243.463	243.604	243.357	1.4	0.0	-0.1
Housing	250.123	251.248	251.885	3.4	0.7	0.3
Shelter	282.147	283.426	284.398	4.0	0.8	0.3
Rent of primary residence ⁽¹⁾	295.927	296.880	297.729	4.2	0.6	0.3
Owners' equiv. rent of residences ^{(1) (2)}	295.909	296.871	297.959	3.8	0.7	0.4
Owners' equiv. rent of primary residence ^{(1) (2)}	295.900	296.862	297.951	3.8	0.7	0.4
Fuels and utilities.....	274.684	274.760	274.195	1.5	-0.2	-0.2
Household energy	240.250	239.786	239.035	-0.4	-0.5	-0.3
Energy services ⁽¹⁾	242.408	241.924	241.174	0.2	-0.5	-0.3
Electricity ⁽¹⁾	263.658	263.361	263.530	0.8	0.0	0.1
Utility (piped) gas service ⁽¹⁾	207.079	206.117	203.122	-1.6	-1.9	-1.5
Household furnishings and operations	128.181	129.299	129.328	0.2	0.9	0.0
Apparel	116.559	118.718	121.096	0.0	3.9	2.0
Transportation	190.929	194.638	203.799	-6.1	6.7	4.7
Private transportation	184.366	188.194	197.986	-6.4	7.4	5.2
New and used motor vehicles ⁽³⁾	99.511	100.642	101.604	0.1	2.1	1.0
New vehicles	145.496	147.272	147.602	1.0	1.4	0.2
New cars and trucks ^{(3) (4)}	101.157	102.349	102.591	1.0	1.4	0.2
New cars ⁽⁴⁾	145.783	147.203	147.144	0.1	0.9	0.0
Used cars and trucks.....	137.029	138.644	142.077	-2.0	3.7	2.5
Motor fuel	189.669	200.971	239.295	-21.3	26.2	19.1
Gasoline (all types).....	188.054	199.636	238.388	-21.2	26.8	19.4
Gasoline, unleaded regular ⁽⁴⁾	185.737	197.305	236.261	-21.6	27.2	19.7
Gasoline, unleaded midgrade ^{(4) (5)}	181.020	192.246	227.372	-20.3	25.6	18.3
Gasoline, unleaded premium ⁽⁴⁾	184.778	195.873	231.223	-19.7	25.1	18.0
Medical Care	447.286	449.719	450.675	2.9	0.8	0.2
Medical care commodities.....	341.585	345.317	345.619	5.7	1.2	0.1
Medical care services.....	480.659	482.519	483.719	2.1	0.6	0.2
Professional services	333.511	336.261	336.518	1.7	0.9	0.1
Recreation ⁽³⁾	109.062	109.610	109.869	0.0	0.7	0.2
Education and communication ⁽³⁾	138.286	138.439	138.151	-0.1	-0.1	-0.2
Other goods and services	401.012	401.142	401.413	0.9	0.1	0.1
Commodity and Service Group						
All Items.....	238.318	239.748	241.690	1.1	1.4	0.8
Commodities	176.041	177.717	181.002	-1.8	2.8	1.8
Commodities less food & beverages.....	139.773	142.131	146.995	-4.7	5.2	3.4
Nondurables less food & beverages	173.286	177.077	186.651	-7.0	7.7	5.4
Nondurables less food, beverages, and apparel	213.492	218.422	232.908	-9.2	9.1	6.6
Durables	108.712	109.762	110.348	-1.0	1.5	0.5
Services.....	295.685	296.863	297.488	2.9	0.6	0.2
Rent of shelter ⁽²⁾	300.156	301.527	302.570	4.0	0.8	0.3

Note: See footnotes at end of table.

Table 1. Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U): Indexes and percent changes for selected periods West (1982-84=100 unless otherwise noted) - Continued

Item and Group	Indexes			Percent change from-		
	Jan. 2015	Feb. 2015	Mar. 2015	Mar. 2014	Jan. 2015	Feb. 2015
Transportation services	278.242	279.634	279.612	1.6	0.5	0.0
Other services	332.835	333.826	334.112	0.7	0.4	0.1
Special aggregate indexes:						
All items less medical care	228.753	230.137	232.108	1.0	1.5	0.9
All items less food	236.753	238.434	240.824	0.8	1.7	1.0
All items less shelter	221.784	223.293	225.665	-0.4	1.7	1.1
Commodities less food	143.659	145.965	150.707	-4.4	4.9	3.2
Nondurables	210.976	212.975	217.779	-2.1	3.2	2.3
Nondurables less food	178.377	181.969	191.002	-6.4	7.1	5.0
Nondurables less food and apparel	216.045	220.507	233.555	-8.2	8.1	5.9
Services less rent of shelter ⁽²⁾	323.522	324.581	324.729	1.6	0.4	0.0
Services less medical care services	282.829	283.959	284.546	3.0	0.6	0.2
Energy	214.552	220.630	241.612	-13.1	12.6	9.5
All items less energy	242.047	243.137	243.653	2.3	0.7	0.2
All items less food and energy	241.520	242.829	243.588	2.3	0.9	0.3
Commodities less food and energy commodities	139.182	140.436	141.211	0.0	1.5	0.6
Energy commodities	193.829	205.085	243.220	-21.3	25.5	18.6
Services less energy services	299.823	301.110	301.824	3.0	0.7	0.2

Footnotes

(1) This index series was calculated using a Laspeyres estimator. All other item stratum index series were calculated using a geometric means estimator.

(2) Index is on a December 1982=100 base.

(3) Indexes on a December 1997=100 base.

(4) Special index based on a substantially smaller sample.

(5) Indexes on a December 1993=100 base.

Regions defined as the four Census regions. West includes Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, Utah, Washington, and Wyoming.

NOTE: Index applies to a month as a whole, not to any specific date. Data not seasonally adjusted.